DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 102 144 SP 008 928

AUTHOR Lasch, Henry A.
TITLE A Study of Health Policies in Public School Administration.
PUB DATE 74
NOTE 11p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.76 HC-$1.58 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS Communicable Diseases; Environment; First Aid; Handicapped Students; *Health Education; *Health Programs; Lunch Programs; *School Health Services; *School Policy; Writing

ABSTRACT

This study was undertaken to identify, classify, and interpret extant written school health policies. Furthermore, it was planned to ascertain whether schools were using standardized forms or systematic procedures to formulate school health policies. Administrators in school districts representing every geographical area of the U.S. were asked to send any written material available in any area of school health. The greatest number of separate statements concerning health policies and procedures were identified under the following categories: health services, administrative responsibilities, first aid and emergency care, health of school personnel, environmental health, and communicable disease prevention and control. A considerably smaller number of policies were identified and classified under the areas of provisions for handicapped pupils; safety and accident prevention; qualifications, requirements and selection of health teachers; transportation policies; school lunch programs; and health instruction. The lack of definite policies and procedures in health instruction was considered particularly appalling. Health and a written statement of school health policies are of paramount importance to students, parents, teachers, and the community. (PB)

ED102144

A STUDY OF HEALTH POLICIES IN PUBLIC SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

Henry A. Lasch, Ph.D.
Professor of Health Science

New Mexico State University

SP 014 925

A STUDY OF HEALTH POLICIES IN PUBLIC SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

Introduction

It is a universal axiom that school administration must be founded upon firm principles, policies and procedures. If policies are clearly stated and defined, they provide the administrator with definite guidelines for decisions, add uniformity to administrative practices and prevent many controversial and unpleasant situations which might otherwise occur.

School health policies should be prepared in writing and stated in terms that are clearly understood by everyone who falls under the jurisdiction of the administrative decision. Furthermore, individuals and groups who are directly affected by decisions should be entitled to a voice in the formation and revision of policies. Certain policies can be stated in general terms while it may be necessary to state other policies in more precise terms. The purpose and application of the policy determines how specific and detailed it should be written.

Since 1960 there have been many local, state and national organizations working resolutely to improve the quality of school health programs. Then comprehensive school health programs receive an equitable share of school finances and professional leadership, they will embrace one of the major divisions of school administration. The planning and supervision of health instruction, health services and a healthful environment requires considerable effort, time, and planning on the part of school administrators. It is little wonder that school health policies are deplorably neglected in many of our nation's schools and assigned a low priority in the total scheme of school administration.

The schools have taken over many roles which were once accepted as traditional responsibilities of the home. The failure of parents to accept,

or even exception, many of their environments has placed a greater burden on the schools. This has become especially discernable in all areas of the school health program. There has been an alarming mismanagement of personal control and many times no target access on objectives of primary importance during the impressionable years of early childhood.

The vast body of knowledge which has accumulated in health science, the expansion of health services in the schools, the technological progress in maintaining a safe and healthful school environment and the health crises which have been nurtured by an apathetic and negligent society, support the urgent need for comprehensive health education cautiously guided by policies and regulations and conducted through proper channels of democratic administration.

Purposes of the Study

The purpose of the study was to identify, classify and interpret school health policies which appeared in written form at the time the research was conducted. Furthermore, the study was planned to ascertain whether the schools are using any standardized forms or systematic procedures to formulate school health policies. All written materials submitted by the schools were thoroughly analyzed.

Limitations of the Study

The study was limited to an evaluation of policies and procedures relating to the major divisions of school health. Any statement which could be interpreted as a written policy or regulation in school health was considered. No attempt was made to evaluate policies, procedures, and regulations which are transacted by verbal agreement. Effective as these may be under certain circumstances, they are useless when an exact statement must be produced to justify an administrative decision. The study is further

[illegible] by the final sampling of participating school districts. The total [illegible] of schools was selected by the investigator. Invitations [illegible] to [illegible] forty-five school districts of which one hundred [illegible] responded by sending packets of written materials. This represented [illegible] of 57.7 percent of the selected sample. While researchers [illegible] this as acceptable return, nevertheless it is possible that a [illegible] larger sampling of school districts in the United States might [illegible] affect on the final results.

Method of Analyzing Data

Throughout the study, it was necessary to examine an [illegible] and variety of materials. Many times controversy may exist as to the [illegible] materials which school districts suggest. Certain [illegible] [illegible] cautions regarding copies of any type of written materials which [illegible] policy statements pertaining to school boards. The specific [illegible] [illegible] announcements were obtained from departments of education in [illegible] [illegible] subscriptions were also asked to furnish copies of [illegible] of education relative to which decisions affecting the school [illegible] were recorded. In order to assure that an adequate amount of [illegible] data would be examined, it was stated that particular emphasis [illegible] on policies which govern certain specified areas of school [illegible]. The following were suggested:

[illegible] instruction - curriculum, course content, [illegible], [illegible] placement, evaluation, retention of textbooks or [illegible] materials.

[illegible] services - medical examination, screening tests, [illegible] records, clinics, [illegible] to school or outside [illegible] health guidance and counseling.

[illegible]